



Advisory 22-06: 988

To: All EMS Agencies and Providers

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Regional Medical Director

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As of this week, the former ten-digit National Suicide Prevention Lifeline transitioned to the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988.

What is 988?

988 is a 3-digit dialing code for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (Lifeline), where compassionate, accessible care and support are available for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress. People in crisis can call or text 988, or use the webchat available at 988lifeline.org

The goals for the Lifeline are to:

- Provide immediate, confidential counseling to someone in distress
- De-escalate suicidal or distressed thoughts
- Connect people with local resources, when appropriate

Who answers 988 calls?

The Lifeline is a network of independent crisis centers across the US and territories. These centers are staffed by trained crisis counselors who are supervised during every shift by a licensed mental health professional. We are fortunate in that locally these services are provided by Goodwill of the Finger Lakes, who also answers 211 and has worked closely with our area 911 centers during the implementation of 988.

How will 988 and EMS work together?

In rare but critical circumstances - less than 2% of contacts - counselors will determine via their protocols that someone is at imminent risk of harming themselves or someone else. In these situations, the Lifeline will contact 911 to dispatch emergency services and traditional dispatch protocols shall be applied to that request for service.

For more information on 988, check out <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988>

With any questions do not hesitate to contact this office.

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